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ABSTRACT

A study examined job satisfaction among women in advertising. Subjects were 48 female respondents from a mail survey of membership of a Midwest advertising club. Two types of job satisfaction measures were used: items from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire and the action tendency scales developed by E. Locke. The results showed a high level of satisfaction similar to or greater than women in the general work force and women in related communications fields. Variety of work, friendliness of co-workers, lack of ethical conflicts and feelings of accomplishment were strong reasons for being satisfied. Less satisfaction was shown with salary and relations with superiors, and younger women were more satisfied than older women. (Twenty-three notes, the job satisfaction questionnaire, and four tables of data are attached.) (ARH)

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JOB SATISFACTION

AMONG

WOMEN IN ADVERTISING

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ABSTRACT

JOB SATISFACTION AMONG WOMEN IN ADVERTISING

A group of advertising women answered standard questions measuring job satisfaction. The results show a high level of satisfaction similar to or greater than women in the general work force and women in related communications fields. Variety of work, friendliness of co-workers, lack of ethical conflicts and feelings of accomplishment were strong reasons for being satisfied. Less satisfaction was shown with salary and relations with superiors. Younger women were more satisfied than older women.

JOB SATISFACTION AMONG WOMEN IN ADVERTISING

Who could dispute the fact that woman are becoming more and more important in shaping the world we live in? Women jurists hand down important decisions. Women newscasters give us vital information. Women in or aspiring to elected office abound, including one who has run for vice-president.

Nowhere is this growing influence of women more evident, or probably more significant, than in the job market. "More women join work force," reads a typical headline in a major metropolitan paper. (1) This particular article goes on to say that in Wisconsin in 1985 women comprised 44% of the work force. That compares to 38% in 1970 and a projected 47% by 1995.

This interesting and extremely important subject has, of course, not gone without study. Popular writers, as well as scholars, have probed into countless issues and many have shed considerable light on the topic in general and the specific effect on certain industries. This study is an attempt to look into one corner of one industry that seems yet unexplored, job satisfaction of women in the advertising industry.

Baron's definition of job satisfaction will be used. He calls it, "attributes held by employees about their work" and expands on that to say it is "the extent to which a worker is content with position, conditions, cooperation and general treatment relative to others in organizations." (2)

Job satisfaction among women in general has been studied

extensively. (3) Barrett studied job satisfaction among newspaperwomen. (4) Selnow and Wilson studied job satisfaction among women in public relations. (5)

It would seem that advertising women would also be an important group to study. Just as their counterparts in newspapers, public relations and other mass communication endeavors, they are more than participants in the trend. They have an influence on what other women think, feel, say and do as well.

And, if there is no doubt the number of women has grown in the general work force, there is certainly no doubt the number of women in advertising has grown at an equal if not faster rate. For instance, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the percentage of women in advertising grew from 42.2% in 1971 to 47.9% in 1981. (6)

What's more, the number is likely to continue growing. The high proportion of women in college advertising programs is a strong indicator. Peterson's 1986 enrollment figures for journalism and mass communications programs listed 13,075 in advertising sequences. Females made up 8,255, or 63%. (7)

The reasons for studying job satisfaction in this group, which is growing in both size and influence, are related to the known effects of being satisfied or dissatisfied with one's work. Locke summarizes these as effects on an individual's attitude toward life and toward family and self. Job satisfaction, he says, can affect physical health and possibly longevity. It may be related to mental health and adjustment and plays a causal role in absenteeism and turnover. It may affect other types of behavior as well. According to Locke, however, it has no <u>direct</u> effect on productivity. (8)

The conclusions regarding job satisfaction in recent research are rather consistent. In general, job satisfaction is high. Over a 20-year period from 1958 to 1977 Quinn & Staines found that between 81% and 92% of employees are reasonably satisfied with their jobs. (9) Also, although it surprises many and they continue to search for reasons, woman do not differ significantly from men in overall work satisfaction. (10) This in spite of the fact these studies also show women have lower status jobs, are paid less and have fewer opportunities for advancement and other work rewards than their male counterparts.

In the studies of newspaper and public relations the results follow a similar pattern. After examining job satisfaction among women journalists Barrett concluded, "American newspaperwomen generally express positive job attitudes," although she did add, this was "tempered by their perceptions of inequities. Those who feel underpaid and/or frustrated in their attempts to advance professionally tend to be more negative." No estimate of the extent of sex-differentiated treatment was made, but she did think it noteworthy that "more than half of the respondents perceived such treatment on the job." (11)

Selnow & Wilson also found job satisfaction high among women in public relations. However, they observed less satisfactory ratings by women in two specific characteristics of public relations work, creativity required by the job and salary. They also found evidence that, despite age and education level, female public relations professionals are paid significantly lower salaries than men. (12)

There seems to be no available literature about women in advertising that uses currently accepted methods of measuring job satisfaction. However, the trade magazine, "Adweek," conducts an

annual survey of adwomen's opinions on a variety of subjects. This is no more than a straw poll because it simply invites women to return a questionnaire bound into one issue. Still, the answers give some hints about their overall job satisfaction and also what problems could detract from it.

In the 1986 survey, more than 80% said advertising was the right career choice for them, certainly an indication their overall job satisfaction is reasonably high. (13) Salary, the lack of opportunity to reach top management positions and the problems of balancing a career with a family seemed to be the trouble spots. In the 1987 survey, (14) more than 50% disagreed with the statement, "To a large degree my financial compensation reflects my performance and contributions." In 1986, 84% agreed with the statement, "A woman has to work harder than her male colleagues to gain the same rewards."

In 1986 half the woman said senior vice president is the top spot an agency woman can achieve today. Only 39% could foresee a female as head of a publicly held agency by the year 2000.

Seventy-eight percent of 1986 respondents said they wanted both a career and children. 54% felt women with children can succeed as well as men. But 81% agreed with the statement, "I have to plan my career more carefully if I want children."

An opportunity to get a better look at job satisfaction among advertising women presented itself to the authors when they were asked to get involved in a survey of the membership of a large Midwest advertising club. With permission of club management a number of standard questions designed to measure job satisfaction were added to the survey document. It was thought an analysis of the results could yield valuable information regarding these objectives:

1. To make a preliminary determination of overall job satisfaction among women in advertising and compare it with the results from other fields, particularly related fields such as newspapers and public relations.

2. To identify specific characteristics of advertising jobs that make women more or less satisfied.

3. To identify variations in job satisfaction among advertising women based on these factors: Years in work force, salary, age and type and size of company.

Method

Female respondents from a mail survey of membership of a Midwest AAF-affiliated advertising club were used for this study (n=48). Females represent 30 percent of membership and represented 35 percent of respondents.

The questionnaire consisted of questions about the advertising club's purposes and functions, and demographics of the respondents. Measures of job satisfaction were attached at the end of the survey with a note indicating their inclusion for research purposes.

Two types of job satisfaction measures were used: 1) items from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) used by Dawis and Lofquist (15); and 2) the action tendency scales developed by Locke (16). The MSQ items tapped respondent feelings about conditions of the work environment such as quality of job facilities, wages, supervisors and co-workers. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with each characteristic on a five-point Likert-type scale (See Figure 1). The action tendency scales asked individuals <u>how they feel like acting</u> rather than asking them to recall <u>how they feel</u> in certain situations or about specific job characteristics. These items focused on a common dimension of job satisfaction: job commitment (17). Respondents indicated their level of agreement with each action tendency on a five-point scale (See Figure 1).

Results

Sample characteristics

Female respondents varied on several key characteristics including years in communication business, age, educational background and segment of industry employed (See Table 1). Median number of years in the business was 6-10, with most females in the sample working for advertising agencies, followed by media and print production, for companies of various sizes based on sales/billings or number of employees. Median age was 25-34, 82% were college graduates most frequently majoring in communication arts or marketing/advertising. Median income range was $25-40,000. Most of these characteristics are mirrored by advertising women in similar size markets throughout the United States (18).

Results Related to Research Objectives 1 and 2: Overall Job Satisfaction

Females indicated they were "satisfied" with various characteristics of their job (See Table 2). A look at their responses on individual items of the job satisfaction scale show females are most satisfied with the "variety" in their work, the "friendliness of co-workers" and the chance "to do things that don't go against their conscience." It seems the qualities of the work itself provide the greatest satisfaction.

On the other hand, females were least satisfied with their salaries and two characteristics of supervisors: the

way bosses delegate work; and the help bosses provide on tough problems. However, note the mean scores on these characteristics were above the middle point on the scale, which indicates these characteristics are not a serious detriment to females' job satisfaction. These experiences with salaries and supervisors are shared by women in many industries, but their impact may be more acute in advertising where work is often done in small groups.

Composite scores on the MSQ and action tendency scales of job satisfaction were also analyzed. Principal components analysis was used to identify underlying dimensions of job satisfaction tapped by these scales (19).

The MSQ items produced a two-factor solution (See Table 3). The first factor included items fundamental to "success," such as opportunities for "advancement," "recognition" and "commensurate pay." The second factor reflected qualities necessary for an enjoyable "work environment," such as the "cooperation," "friendliness" and "pleasantness" of co-workers. Reliabilities for the respective scales were good (See Table 3).

The action tendency scales also produced a two-factor solution, but the second factor included two items ("wishing holidays were over so work could resume" and "job expectations") that seemed unrelated and were unreliable (See Table 3). These latter items were only analyzed individually.

Respondent scores for the variables on each of the factors of job satisfaction were summed prior to further analysis. The stability of the factors generated by this analysis is somewhat suspect given the size of the sample relative to the number of items analyzed with principal components (20). Therefore, conclusions based on these multi-item scales should be made with caution.

Results Related to Research Objective 3: Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

One-way analysis of variance was used to identify differences in job satisfaction related to personal characteristics such as age and length of time in advertising and by conditions such as the type of work done and size of company.

Significant differences ($p<.05$) were found for the "success" dimension of job satisfaction based on age and number of years respondent was in advertising/ communications (See Table 4). Younger females (18-34) with five or less years in advertising were more satisfied with the opportunities for success in their job than older, more experienced females.

Females at advertising agencies were more satisfied with "work environment" than females in media and collateral service jobs (See Table 4). Breakdowns within each segment based on job titles were not possible because of the lack of precision in differentiating groups (job titles vary among companies) and insufficient cell sizes.

Other noteworthy findings that approached statistical significance concerned variations in satisfaction based on company size (sales/billings) (See Table 4). Females at either large or small companies experienced greater satisfaction on the "working environment" and "daily tendencies" dimensions than females at medium-size companies.

CONCLUSIONS

Answers to both MSQ questions and the action-tendency questions confirmed other indications about job satisfaction among women in advertising. Clearly, it is quite high, as high or higher than women in the general work force and as high as women in the related fields of newspaper journalism and public relations. An exact comparison isn't possible because of differences in methodologies. However, one question in a study reported by Baron (21) is similar to a question in this study and a comparison of those responses reinforces the point. In the former, when asked if they would choose the same line of work if they had it to do over again, only 41% of white collar workers and 24% of blue collar workers answered positively. In this study, 78% of women in advertising gave a positive answer.

The presence of salary at the low end of the satisfaction scale seems to confirm one of the indications in the Adweek surveys. Women in advertising believe they are underpaid.

It is interesting that the characteristics where women showed the most satisfaction were all related to the job itself and the characteristics where they showed the least satisfaction, and are therefore under suspicion as dissatisfying elements, are related to company and supervision. Could it be that women in advertising like their work better than the organizations they work for?

If true, there are certainly a number of hypotheses to account for it. If they enjoy the work but feel frustrated about salary they would tend to blame the organization and particularly

the supervisor (probably male) who makes more and yet isn't as helpful or as fair as he could be. If, as the Adweek surveys also suggest, they are blocked from top management, that would be the fault of the organization, not the work itself. Or, it could simply be put down to the fact there is such high satisfaction in the variety of work and the feeling of accomplishment no organization could live up to the expectations of rewards and recognition. Further research measuring both female and male satisfaction about their work and their organization could provide answers.

Younger, less experienced females seem to be experiencing satisfaction from the advances made by earlier generations. Younger females have probably not experienced doors closed to career advancement as they approach the level of middle management. However, veteran females who have risen to middle management are more likely to find advancement to top management blocked by "the old boy network." (22)

An alternative explanation for the difference in job satisfaction based on age and experience in advertising is females may not experience the frustrations of the job, added workload and conflicts with personal life until at least five years into their careers. Beginning females may receive special treatment as agencies and media try to increase female representation in their work forces. Job conflicts with marriage and raising a family have been mentioned as concerns by advertising women (23), but were not measured in this study, thus eliminating their use as covariates to help explain this finding.

Differences in satisfaction between females at advertising agencies and those working in media may be directly attributable to the work environment. Media sales jobs are accompanied by a

somewhat unstable job environment, with employees frequently outside the office making sales visits. The more stable environs of an office, more typical of work in an advertising agency, are likely to contribute to increased satisfaction. An interesting follow-up study would look at the perceptions media salespeople have of the job satisfaction of ad agency employees and vice versa. It is possible the exposure of these two groups to the other's job environment is propagating the differences in satisfaction levels.

Although the differences in job satisfaction due to company size were not significant, it is worth nothing the pattern of greater satisfaction for employees of small and large companies compared to medium-size companies ($2-50M). One would expect job satisfaction to be a function of the intimacy and personable nature of a small company. Apparently, large companies recognize the problems related to size and take effective steps to maintain employee interaction and exchange, and hence, satisfaction. However, at medium-size companies, employees may easily get "lost in the daily shuffle" and their job satisfaction is affected accordingly. The differences found in this study are likely to be greater nationally considering the limits in variation of company size inherent in a single market.

A single market sampling universe and limited sample size are two limitations of this study. Although care was used in selecting statistical analyses that can address problems related to small samples, the stability of score variation is questionable. Future analysis that would merge data from findings of other single market studies may be an efficient way of studying job satisfaction among females in the advertising industry.

Another limitation of the sample was the sampling frame. Members of AAF-affiliated advertising clubs are likely to be excited about their advertising job and satisfied with the rewards of their employment. Future studies, in addition to sampling nationally, should attempt to draw respondents directly from employee rosters of advertising departments, media, collateral services and advertising agencies, rather than exclusively from the membership rosters of professional organizations.

NOTES

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2. R. Baron, Behavior in Organizations (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1983).

3. K.M. Bartol, & M.S. Wortman, "Sex Effects in Leader Behavior Self Descriptions and Job Satisfaction," Journal of Psychology, 94:177-183 (1976). R. Golembiewski, "Testing Some Stereotypes About the Sexes in Organizations: Differential Satisfaction with Work," Human Resource Management, 16:30-32 (1977). C. Weaver, "Sex Differences in the Determinants of Job Satisfaction," Academy of Management Journal, 21:265-274 (1978). C. Mottaz, "Gender Differences in Work Satisfaction, Work-Related Rewards and Values, and the Determinants of Work Satisfaction," Human Relations, 39:359-378 (1986).

4. G.H. Barrett, "Job Satisfaction Among Newspaperwomen," Journalism Quarterly, 61:593-599 (1984).

5. G.W. Selnow & S. Wilson, "Sex Roles and Job Satisfaction in Public Relations," Public Relations Review, 11:4:38-47 (1985).

6. Labor Force Statistics Derived from the Current Population Survey, U.S.Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, (1982) pp. 669 & 680.

7. R.V. Peterson, "Enrollment up 7% in '86, Outstripping University Growth," Journalism Educator, 42:1:5 (1987)

8. E. Locke, "Nature and Causes of Job Satisfaction," in M. Dunnette (Ed.), Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology (New York: J. Wiley and Sons, 1983) p. 1334.

9. R.P. Quinn & G. Staines, "The 1977 Quality of Employment Survey," Ann Arbor:Institute for Social Research, (1979) in R. Baron, Op. cit. p. 212 & 215.

10. Ibid.

11. Op. cit., p. 599.

12. Op. cit., pp. 46-7.

13. "The Fourth Annual Women's Survey," Adweek, 27:W30-2 (July 7, 1986).

14. "The Fifth Annual Women's Survey," Adweek, 28:WR30-1 (July 6, 1987).

15. R. Dawis & L. Lofquist, A Psychological Theory of Work Adjustment (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984)

16. Op. cit.

17. Baron, Op. cit.

18. Adweek (July 6, 1987) Op. cit.

19. H. Harman, Modern Factor Analysis, 3e. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

20. Ibid.

21. Op. cit., p.214

22. B. Bodec, "Why So Few Women at the Top?" Marketing and Media Decisions, 17:70-1+ (April, 1982)

23. Adweek (July 7, 1986) Op. cit.

Figure 1
Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

A local research study is looking into job satisfaction in the communications industry. Please take some additional time to complete the following questions to the best of your ability. Again, remember all information will remain confidential.

Please circle the number that represents your level of satisfaction with various aspects of your present job that are listed below. Let 5 mean Very Satisfied
4 mean Satisfied
3 mean Neutral
2 mean Dissatisfied
1 mean Very Dissatisfied

ON MY PRESENT JOB, THIS IS HOW I FEEL ABOUT... (CIRCLE ONE)	Very dissat.	Dis. sat.	N	Sat.	Very Sat.
19. The chance to have others look to me for direction.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Opportunities for advancement on this job.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The spirit of cooperation among co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
22. The chance to do different things from time to time.	1	2	3	4	5
23. The quality of the equipment and staff support to help me do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience.	1	2	3	4	5
25. The way my boss backs up his/her employees (with top management).	1	2	3	4	5
26. How my pay compares with that for similar jobs in other companies.	1	2	3	4	5
27. The way my boss delegates work to others.	1	2	3	4	5
28. The recognition I get for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5

29.The friendliness of my co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
30.The pleasantness of working conditions.	1	2	3	4	5
31.The way my boss provides help on tough problems.	1	2	3	4	5
32.How my pay compares with that of co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
33.The feeling of accomplishment I get from my job.	1	2	3	4	5

Indicate your level of agreement with each statement by circling the appropriate number. On a 1-5 scale, let 1 mean strongly disagree and 5 mean strongly agree. (CIRCLE ONE)

	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
34.When I wake up in the morning, I often feel reluctant to go to work.	1	2	3	4	5
35.I often feel like going to lunch at work sooner than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
36.I often wish holidays or weekends would get over so that I could go back to work.	1	2	3	4	5
37.If I were starting over in my working career, I would lean toward taking the same type of job I have now.	1	2	3	4	5
38.I often feel like just walking out on this job for good.	1	2	3	4	5
39.While I am on my way to work, I often feel like going somewhere else instead.	1	2	3	4	5
40.I underestimated the job expectations of my current job when I took it.	1	2	3	4	5

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Female Respondents
(N=48)

Years in Advertising/Communication	n	%
>5	19	40
6-10	15	31
11+	14	29

Segment of Industry	n	%
Ad Agency	18	37
Media	9	18
Print Prod	8	16
Client	6	12

Size of company

Annual Sales/Billings	n	%
>1m	12	24
1-10m	12	24
11m+	20	40

# of Employees	n	%
50 or >	9	19
51-100	15	31
100-500	13	27
+500	11	23

Age	n	%
>35	26	54
35-44	16	33
45<	6	13

Salary	n	%
>$25000	11	23
$25-40	19	39
$40-55	10	20
$55000+	5	10

Education	n	%
College Undergrad	27	55
Some Grad work or degree	13	27

Degree	n	%
Comm. /rts	8	16
Bus/Mkt/Adv	7	14
Lib Arts	6	12
Fine Arts	5	10

NOTE: n's don't always total 48 because missing values, or categories not listed.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics on Individual Job Satisfaction Items

MSQ items	Mean	S.D.
Variety	4.44	.848
Friendliness of co-workers	4.38	.703
Ethical conflicts	4.33	.724
Feeling of accomplishment	4.25	.911
Others look for direction	4.17	.883
Pleasantness of work	4.17	.907
Co-worker cooperation	3.96	.922
Quality of equipment	3.92	.895
Opportunities for advance	3.78	1.094
Boss backs me up	3.73	1.304
Recognition	3.70	1.178
Pay comparable w/co-workers	3.58	1.138
Boss helps on problems	3.48	1.285
Boss delegates work fair	3.43	1.283
Pay commensurate	3.42	1.2
Action tendency items		
Go to lunch sooner	4.15	.859
On way to work, go elsewh	4.08	1.182
Reluctant to work in a.m.	4.06	1.04
Start over, take same job	3.98	1.101
Walk out on job	3.94	1.21
Underestimate job expect.	3.81	1.214
Holidays over so can work	3.70	.954

Table 3

Factor Loading Matrix for Job Satisfaction Measures

LABEL:	I SUCCESS	II WORK ENVIRONMENT	h^2
Advancement	.75	.30	.65
Boss supports	.81	.26	.72
Pay comparable	.59	.42	.53
Work delegated fairly	.93	.15	.88
Recognition	.67	.45	.65
Boss helpful	.91	.15	.85
Pay commensurate	.90	.10	.82
Cooperation	.19	.89	.82
Variety	.31	.69	.57
Equipment quality	.25	.76	.64
Conflict w/consc.	.29	.75	.65
Friendly co-work	.11	.85	.73
Pleasant	.20	.88	.82
Direction	.61	.56	.68
Accomplishment	.52	.48	.50
EIGENVALUE:	8.26	2.25	
VAR. EXPLAINED:	55%	15%	
ALPHA:	.89	.80	

LABEL:	I DAILY TENDENCIES	II LONG-TERM TENDENCIES	h^2
Wake reluctant to work	.88	.09	.78
Lunch early	.73	.05	.54
Start over same	.75	.05	.56
Walk out of job	.77	.27	.67
Go elsewhere	.85	.18	.77
Holidays over so back to work	-.04	.85	.73
Underestimate job	.32	.66	.53
EIGENVALUE:	3.51	1.06	
VAR. EXPLAINED:	50%	15%	
ALPHA:	.79	.08	

Table 4

Differences in Job Satisfaction Among Female Groups

AGE on "SUCCESS"

Group	Mean	DF	F	p
<35	26.3			
		1,46	6.89	.01
35+	20.9			

OF YRS IN COMMUNICATION INDUSTRY on "SUCCESS"

Group	Mean	DF	F	p
5 or less	26.4			
6 to 10	24.0	2,45	3.03	.05
11+	20.2			

SEGMENT OF INDUSTRY EMPLOYED on "WORKING ENVIRONMENT"

Group	Mean	DF	F	p
Ad Agency	26.6			
		1,53	4.42	.04
Media and Collateral Services	24.1			

Differences approaching significance

COMPANY SIZE (SALES/BILLINGS) on "WORKING ENVIRONMENT"

Group	Mean	DF	F	p
$2M or less	26.3			
$2M to $50M	24.1	2,45	1.76	.18
$50M +	25.4			

COMPANY SIZE (SALES/BILLINGS) on "DAILY TENDENCIES"

Group	Mean	DF	F	p
$2M or less	20.6			
$2M to $50M	18.8	2,45	1.33	.17
$50M +	21.3			

NOTE: Changes in DF among tests reflect either missing values or analysis of limited subcategories on a variable.